

Navy Capt. (Dr.) Mike Colston



Director

Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury

Navy Capt. (Dr.) Mike Colston is the DCoE director. He is responsible for the work of approximately 600 employees at DCoE headquarters and [centers](#) who work to improve the lives of our nation's service members, families and veterans by advancing excellence in the prevention and care of psychological health conditions and traumatic brain injury.

Colston joined the Navy as a line officer, serving as a nuclear engineer and surface warfare officer aboard USS Carl Vinson (CVN-70), deploying twice to the Arabian Sea and completing a Pacific Rim Exercise. Transitioning to the Medical Corps, he earned a medical degree from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences; trained as a resident in psychiatry at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland; and completed a fellowship in child and adolescent psychiatry at Northwestern University in Chicago. Colston holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial and Management Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a master's degree in Marine Affairs from the University of Rhode Island.

In previous medical corps assignments, Colston served as Chief of the Mental Health Department at Naval Hospital Great Lakes, overseeing a large-scale clinical integration that led to merged VA-DoD services at the Lovell Federal Health Care Center. During deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he led a combat and operational stress team that supported a catchment of 10,000 service members. As director of the Mental Health Program in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, Colston managed a mental health board project that reviewed over 200,000 cases involving posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression diagnoses, led a mental health team in the independent investigation of the 2013 Washington Navy Yard tragedy, and co-chaired the Defense Department Addictive Substances Misuse Advisory Committee, helping address a nationwide scourge of opiate addiction on several fronts.

Colston is an experienced leader and speaker representing the Defense Department in testimony to Congress and presidential executive offices including the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the Domestic Policy Council, and the National Security Council. Colston served on research advisory boards for the Congressionally-directed Medical Research Program, the Military Suicide Research Consortium and the National Institutes of Health National Advisory Council on Neurological Disorders and Stroke. As an author, Colston wrote a chapter on the forensic aspects of PTSD in the "Textbook of Military Medicine" series, and is published in peer-reviewed journals on topics including uncertainties in diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses and bioethical considerations related to research in psychological health; traumatic brain injury; and suicide.

Colston is credentialed at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, Virginia, is board certified in child and adolescent psychiatry, and has practiced in inpatient, outpatient and step-down addiction settings. His military awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Office of the Secretary of Defense Badge, Surface Warfare and Officer-in-Charge Afloat devices, and campaign medals and ribbons spanning four overseas operations.